



printer

EPSON STYLUS PHOTO 1270

Sometimes A4 just isn't big enough. Meet Epson's new ink-jet

Recent developments in digital cameras and scanners have made high resolution digital images fairly common – you're no longer restricted to printing photographs at small sizes from your digital camera. Epson's latest offering, the Stylus Pro 1270 ink-jet printer, can take advantage of these big pictures by printing them on A3 paper. As well as handling a wide range of paper sizes including standard A4, the extra size is useful for posters, larger photographs and to produce folded A4 pamphlets. A3 photographic paper has been expensive in the past but prices are now getting more realistic.

Ten year guarantee

Epson claims that images produced on this printer will have a display life in excess of ten years under artificial light, without any noticeable fading. This is achieved using new 'lightfast' dye ink and is only guaranteed to work with Epson premium glossy photo paper – a great way to promote its own paper sales. Don't expect this length of image persistence in direct sunlight – our current long-term exposure tests show image degradation much earlier. (We plan to do a round up of ink-jet papers in the near future which will include an assessment of relative print costs and life expectancy, but we won't try the ten year test.)

The Stylus Pro is a six-colour photo ink-jet using Epson's latest Micro Piezo print-head with Ultra Micro Dot technology. Epson claims this produces extremely small droplets of 4pl (picolitres). Coupled with its PhotoEnhance 4 technology and 1,440dpi printing, this produces exceptional quality printing, especially on Epson's own photo paper. Its latest generation ink cartridges relay ink status information to the printer. If you don't have enough ink for a particular print, the printer will ask you to replace the cartridge. The old one is self-sealing

Tested on K6 400
Extra Information Optional paper feed roller available for £22 (ex VAT £19) and an eight metre roll of glossy paper for £30 (ex VAT £26)



The Stylus Pro 1270 can handle A3 paper – useful for posters and larger photographs.

■ **PRICE** £399 ■ **EX VAT** £340 ■ **SUPPLIER** Epson ■ **PHONE** 0800 289 622 ■ **WWW** www.epson.co.uk

and can be used again for a job that requires less ink.

Epson has managed to stretch the printer margins so that they can print edge-to-edge, which means photographs don't have to be trimmed. This feature is available with the optional paper roll holder; this takes 100mm wide premium glossy photo paper in eight metre lengths and is aimed at volume photo print production. The paper path is from a rear feeder unit through the printer, with the final print delivered to a support tray at the front. Extensions on both the feeder and final tray can be extended for A3 paper. These extensions are functional but a bit flimsy in design. The shallow print path means that the paper doesn't roll back on itself (as in most Hewlett-Packard printers) and, therefore, handles heavier grades of paper.

Although Epson has managed to reduce the noise levels compared with some of the earlier Stylus printers, the start up procedure is still quite noisy and long-winded. When you first switch it on, the printer undertakes exhaustive cleaning routines and can take about twenty seconds before it's ready for use.

Published print speeds are on the optimistic side. Our test produced five pages in two and a half minutes on a repeat print of A4 black text – much slower than the claimed nine pages per minute. A full high-quality A4 print takes about 19 minutes. Lifetime is quoted at 25,000 pages of A4 paper, 540

A4 text pages for the black cartridge and 330 A4 for 25 per cent colour text. Epson doesn't quote any numbers for full colour printing. If you're planning to do any large print runs this could get expensive.

USB connections are provided and drivers included for all variants of Windows. This printer is aimed at the production of high-quality graphics photo output and Epson provides a 'Lite' version of Adobe Photoshop for pre-print editing.

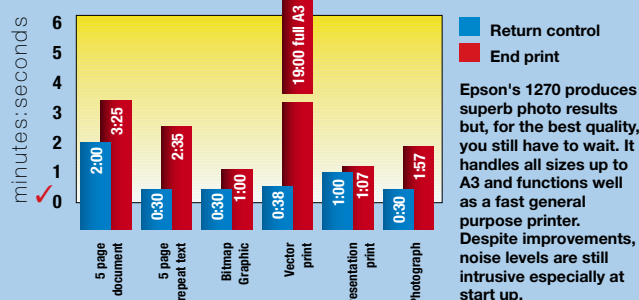
This is one of the most economical entries into serious A3 colour photo printing and, though not the most robust machine we've tested, performed well and gave excellent results.

Paul Warner

Using Epson's new 'lightfast' dye ink and its premium glossy photo paper, images produced on this printer will have a display life of over ten years.



PRINTER TEST RESULTS



PC Plus

VERDICT

EPSON STYLUS PHOTO 1270

For Great image quality. We'll let you know about print life in ten years

Against Still a noisy start up and fragile support, especially with A3 paper

Range of features.....9
Ease of use.....8
Documentation.....7
Performance.....9
Value for money.....8

8/10